

No Objection to Declassification in Part 2010/08/12 : LOC-HAK-543-2-5-1

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
15 October 1973

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

State Dept & DIA review(s) completed for
entire document

MIDDLE EAST

MORI C03326465

Situation Report Number 38
(as of 0630 EDT)

THE MILITARY SITUATION

GENERAL

1. There was no significant ground force activity on either front during the night, but Israeli aircraft were active over Syria and southern Lebanon. On the Egyptian front, Israeli naval forces reportedly conducted a night raid on an Egyptian port in the southern Gulf of Suez, and Israeli and Egyptian aircraft returned to action over Egypt and the Sinai this morning.

EGYPTIAN FRONT

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3. Artillery fire was reported by Egyptian observers at several locations in the northern Suez Canal area during the night, but no further details are available.

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4. According to an Israeli radio report, Israeli naval vessels staged a raid during the night on the Egyptian port of Ras Gharib in the southern Gulf of Suez and burned Egyptian vessels and ammunition supplies. The Israeli report claimed that the base was a staging area for Egyptian commandos. The raid reflects Israeli sensitivity to threats of Egyptian landings in the southern Sinai peninsula.

5. According to recently available information, Egyptian naval units in the Mediterranean, assisted by four helicopters, yesterday afternoon expended ordnance on what may have been a submarine. Neither the identity of the target nor results of the attack were reported.

SYRIAN FRONT

6. There was no reported ground force activity during the night. In the air the Israelis conducted extensive operations throughout the night, and have attacked Damascus this morning. Israeli aircraft have penetrated Lebanon as far north as Beirut and east to Baalbek. A report of Israeli and unidentified aircraft ranging over northern Lebanon and the Mediterranean sea suggests that an air battle may be in progress.

7. Radio Damascus reports that in addition to bombing Damascus, Israeli aircraft have attacked the ports of Tartus and Latakia. The Syrians also report that ground fighting has broken out in the northern sector of the front. Israel claims to have repulsed a small Syrian-Iraqi counterattack in the vicinity of Sasa.

8. Yesterday evening the Iraqi 3rd armored division made two unsuccessful attempts to dislodge the Israelis from positions in the hills nine miles from Qunaytirah.

10. The Government of Israel, through the US Ambassador in Amman, has warned the Jordanians against moving their brigade in Syria closer to Israeli troops. The Israelis believe that the Jordanian brigade is less than ten miles from Israeli forces. There have been no clashes between Israeli and Jordanian forces since the beginning of the Jordanian intervention in the war.

11. A USDAO cable from Tel Aviv reports that the Israelis plan to move slowly and cautiously in Syria, using action on the Syrian front as bait to force the Egyptians to commit themselves in the Sinai. The Israelis believe that the Syrians may withdraw to their second defensive line south of Damascus.

STATUS OF SOVIET FORCES

13. Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean generally maintained their previous positions. Four Soviet naval ships entered the Mediterranean yesterday--one oiler, one intelligence collection ship, and two LSTs.

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EGYPTIAN OBJECTIVES

17. The Egyptian army attache in Islamabad told his US counterpart yesterday that Egypt's only objective in the current war is to regain territory lost in 1967. Egypt has no designs on Israeli territory, according to the attache. Within six months of a peace settlement, Egyptian labor and American engineers could reopen the Suez Canal. The canal would then be open to all world commerce regardless of political considerations. The attache said that Egypt was still interested in US participation in the SUMED pipeline project.

ISRAEL: THE COST OF WAR

18. Israel today announced its casualty figures for the first eight days of fighting, reporting 656 soldiers killed--compared to 777 killed during the 1967 Six-Day War--and 2,000 wounded. Among those killed in action was Major General Avram Mendler, deputy commander of the Sinai Armored Corps.

KUWAIT

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24. The situation for American residents in Kuwait appears to be taking a turn for the worse. An American businessman living in Kuwait was told by high-level Kuwaiti friends that if the US limits its resupply efforts to Israel to ammunition, little negative reaction would be forthcoming. If the US should resupply aircraft or tanks, however, his friends advised that he should leave Kuwait at once. The businessman was further informed that Kuwaiti retaliation could include nationalization of oil interests, cut-off of oil supplies, and permanent damage to US business interests in Kuwait.

SAUDI ARABIA

25. The US Embassy in Jidda believes Saudi Arabia soon may announce retaliatory action for US resupply

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efforts to Israel. The Embassy believes that the most likely move will be against US oil interests, perhaps the imposition of a cutback or a ceiling on production.

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